RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 18th March, 1993/t/ie *21th Phalguna,* 1914 *(Saka)*

[*The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr. Chairman* in (in Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, what has happened to the ruling party? Even when the Prime Minister is there, their benches are empty.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Prime Minister is here. What else do you want?

SHRI -DIPEN GHOSH: Most ot the Rajya Sabha Members of the ruling party belong to the dissident group.

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : क्या माना जाए कि डिसिडेंट्स की संख्या अधिक हो गई है कांग्रेस-आई में। .... **(व्यवधान)**

श्री राम नरेश यादव : हम लोगों को चिन्ता है जिस तरह से कलकत्ता में क्या हो गया है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 321.

*321. *[The questioner (Shri Mool chand Meena)* was absent. For an swer vide Col ..... infra.]

पेंशन का भुगतान

***322. श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह :** क्या **प्रधान मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) देश और विदेशों में भारत सरकार से पेंशन प्राप्त कर रहे पेंशन-भोगियों की कुल संख्या कितनी है;

(ख) देश और विदेशों में रह रहे इन पेंशनभोगियों को प्रतिवर्ष कुल कितनी राशि का भुगतान किया जा रहा है ; और

(ग) विदेशों में रह रहें पेंशन भोगियों को पेंशन का भुगतान किस मुद्रा में किया जा रहा है ?

कार्मिक, लोक शिकायत और पेंशन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री का अतिरिक्त प्रभार (श्रीमती मार्ग्रेट आल्वा) : (क) देश और विदेशों में भारत सरकार से पेंशन प्राप्त कर रहे पेंशनभोगियों (स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों तथा डाक व दूरसंचार पेंशनभोगियों के अलावा) की लगभग संख्या निम्न प्रकार है :–

भारत	27.27 लाख
विदेश	0.42 लाख

(ख) 1991–92 में पेंशनभोगियों को किया गया भुगतान 3759 करोड़ रुपये था, जिसमें से 67.55 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान विदेश में रह रहे पेंशनभोगियों को किया गया था।

(ग) नेपाल में पेंशन प्राप्त कर रहे पेंशनभोगियों को भुगतान नेपाली मुद्रा में किया जाता है, यू०के० तथा अन्य देशों में कुछ पेंशनभोगियों को भुगतान स्थानीय मुद्रा में तथा बाकी सभी पेंशनभोगियों को भुगतान भारतीय रुपये में किया जाता है।

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : सभापति जी, जो जवाब हमारे पास आया है उससे पूरी जानकारी मुझे नहीं मिल रही है। मैं समझता हूं कि मंत्री महोदया शायद मौखिक रूप से इस पर कुछ विस्तार से प्रकाश डालेंगी। पहली बात तो मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि यह जो 1991–92 में पेंशनभोगियों को किया गया भुगतान 3759 करोड़ रुपये का बताया है, तो क्या यह राशि 1991–92 तक की है या इतने रुपये प्रति वर्ष पेंशनधारियों को दिया जाता है, यह क्लियर पता नहीं चल रहा है। इसके सम्बन्ध में मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि विदेशों में जिन लोगों को पेंशन की राशि आप विदेशी मुद्रा में भुगतान करती हैं, मूल रूप से उन्होंने भारत में अपनी सेवाएं दी और इंडियन सिविल सर्विस या दूसरी सिविल सर्विसेज के मातहत उन्होंने भारत में काम किया। तो क्या भारत सरकार इस पर भी विचार करती है कि जो भी भारत में अपनी सेवाएं दे उनको पेंशन की राशि

जिस रूप में भी दी जाए वह भारतीय मुद्रा में ही दी जाए, विदेशी मुद्रा में न दी जाए और यदि विदेशी मुद्रा में दी जा रही है तो उसके कारण क्या हैं और विदेशी मुद्रा में जो लोग आपसे पेंशन ले रहे हैं, उनकी संख्या विभिन्न देशों में अलग-अलग क्या है ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I would like, first of all to give the clarification which the hon. Member has asked for. This Rs. 3,759 crores was for 1991-92, as I said in the answer.

SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH: That is only for one year.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Yes, for that year. The specific question that has been asked is about the payment in foreign curren cies. I have the break-up here. As far as Defence pension is concerned, 40631 pensioners are being paid in Nepal. That is the maximum number. In the U.K. we have 73 and Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Australia, Singapore and Mauritius altogether we have 28. These are in the Defece pension. As far as civilians are concerned, we have 1309 again in Nepal. Sir, we do have the question of payment in foreign currency. Under the pension rules, all those drawing pensions, civilian pensions, will be paid only in Indian currency. But under the rules, for those who retired from the Armed Forces before 1949, they are entitled to get their pension in foreign currency if they are abroad. As far as the Railways are concerned, those who retired in or before 1956, under their rules, they were to be paid in foreign currency if they are abroad. People are getting their pensions as per rules which are already in existence.

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : सभापति जी, मुद्रास्फीति और बढ़ती महंगाई के बाद जो स्थिति देश की है उसमें जो पेंशन जिन लोगों को तय किया गया था और आज जिस तरह से उनको पेंशन भुगतान हो रहा है, उसको देखते हुए ऐसा लग रहा है कि मुद्रा की कीमत दिनों-दिन घटती जा रही है और उनकी मुसीबतें बढ़ती जा रही हैं। तो मैं इस संबंध में दो बातें जानना चाहूंगा। एक तो यह कि बहुत से पेंशनधारी अपनी पेंशन प्राइवेट लोगों के हाथ में बेच देते हैं और कुछ ऐसी एजेंसियां हैं जो उनसे खरीद लेती हैं कि आपका जो भी पेंशन होगा, मैं ड्रा करूंगा। मैं ड्रा करूंगा मतलब आप हमारे हाथ में बेच दीजिए और मुझ से एकमुश्त आप इतना पैसा ले लीजिए और इस तरह की एजेंसीज जो खुल गई हैं।

मैं सरकार से जानना चाहूंगा कि जैसे सरकार ने अभी एक कानून स्वेच्छा रिटायरमेंट का बनाया है, जिसके तहत उद्योगों में, सार्वजनिक संस्थानों में, बहुत से लोगों ने रिटायरमेंट लिया है। उसी तरह से क्या सरकार इस बात पर विचार करेगी कि जो लोग रिटायर करते हैं, सेवानिवृत्त होते हैं, उनको 5 साल, 10 साल, 15 साल, कोई एक अवधि इस तरह की निर्धारित की जा सकती है कि सरकार एक साथ उनको पेंशन की राशि दे दे जिससे वे कुछ कार्य कर सकें या किसी उद्योग में लग सकें या अपना कोई कारोबार कर सकें।

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, as far as the question of price rise and devaluation of the amount that the pensioners get is concerned, I would like to inform the hon. Member that now DA is also paid to the pensioners so that the rise Sh prices is offset by this system. This we introduced a few years ago during the Government of Shri Rajiv Gan-dhi. This system has been welcomed by the pensioners all over the country. As far as the public sector undertakings are concerned, we do not have, at the moment, a uniform pat-tern of pension for them. There are various schemes for various undertakings, which they themselves workout. Sir the hon. Member has also asked about a lumpsum payment for those who take Pre-mature retirement and those whs would like to start something on their own. There is...

SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH: Sir, *1* want that they should get a lum'psum amount on retirement.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, there is Provident Fund and gratuity which is being provided for. This does not come under the Central "Pension Scheme. As I said, some of ;them operate their own pension schemes together with L.I.C. They put in the money for working out various schemes. This is decentralised. As far as the public sector undertakings *are* concerned they work this out on their own.

श्री छोटू भाई पटेल : सर, सरकार ने स्वातंत्रता सेनानियों के बारे में काफी सही कदम उठाए हैं। ये सराहनीय बात है। मगर अभी भी कितने स्वतंत्रता सेनानी ऐसे भी हैं जिनको अभी पेंशन नहीं मिल रही है और ये बात पिटीशन कमेटी में भी सामने आई। तो क्या सरकार के पास जिन राज्यों में स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों को पेंशन नहीं मिल रही है, उसको दिलाने के लिए ठोस कार्यवाही करने का कोई प्रोग्राम है? अगर प्रोग्राम है तो कौन सा प्रोग्राम है?

सर, हमारे बलसार जिले में दांडी, जो एक इंटरनेशनल, हिस्टॅरिकल प्लेस है, जहां से मैं आता हूं, उस एरिया में काफी स्वतंत्रता सेनानी हैं जिनको पेंशन अभी भी नहीं मिल रही है। तो आपके माध्यम से सरकार से मैं अर्ज कर रहा हूं कि बाकी पेंशनर जो हैं, जो हकदार हैं, उनको दिलाने के लिए कुछ ठोस कदम सरकार उठाए।

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I may clarify that the Department of Pension in our Ministry does not deal directly with the freedom fighters' pension. It is handled by a special cell in the Home Ministry. But I would like to tell the hon. Member that the concern of the nation and of the Government for the welfare of freedom fighters cannot be ignored or under-estimated. Every effort has been made for speedy disbursement or disposal of freedom fighters pension. Today we have 1,61,366 Central freedom fighters pensioners and the payment made in 1991 was Rs. 53.28 crores. In 1991-92 it went up to Rs. 80.17 crores. But if there are specific cases where there have been delays or unreasonable kind of information feeing called for— we do get complaints in the grievances cell in our Grievances Ministry about such delays—we immediately take it up with the Ministry of Home Affairs and see that these problems are. sorted out.

श्री ईश दत्त यादव : माननीय सभापति जी, मेरा प्रश्न स्वतंत्रता संग्राम सेनानियों को जो पेंशन दी जाती है और इसका जो कानून 1972 में बना उसके बारे में है। तो मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि स्वतंत्रता संग्राम सेनानियों और उनके आश्रितों को जो पेंशन दी जाती है, इसमें आश्रितों को पेंशन देने का मापदंड क्या सरकार ने बनाया है? किस आधार पर आश्रितों को पेंशन दी जाती है? 1972 के बाद, यह कानून पास होने के बाद अगर किसी स्वतंत्रता संग्राम सेनानी ने शादी कर ली तो क्या उनके दिवंगत होने के बाद ऐसी विधवाओं को भी पेंशन दी जा रही है? यदि दी जा रही है तो उनकी संख्या क्या है?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P. V. NARSIMHA RAO): This is a matter of great detail not just detail but great detail and recent detail. It is better we ask the Home Ministry about how the rules apply in such cases. Is it a very specific kind of case where a freedom fighter marries after he has been given pension and he dies. whether his widow is entitled for pension: Common sense sug gest that she should be en titled. But we will have to take de tails from the Home Ministry...
(Interruptions)...

श्री ईश दत्त यादव : आश्रितों को जो पेंशन दी जाती है उनकी संख्या जानना चाह रहा हूं और उसका मापदंड क्या है ?

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : उससे ज्यादा तो जो पेंडिंग केसेज हैं उनका डिस्पोजल करें, टाइम बाउन्ड प्रोग्राम बनाकर उनका फैसला करें.... (व्यवधान)

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: My sup plementary is whether the Governroent is aware of the fact that different pensioners' organisations are-agitating over many of their demands which have remained unfulfilled for long years. Among their demands, one is protection of the pension they get from price rise and its effects. I would like to know whether Govern-ment is ready to accommodate the .demand of the pensioners who get only Rs. 100 odd per month per head. Is the Government ready to ' increase the amount and protect their monthly pension from the effect of price rise? Is the Government ready to discuss with pensioners' organisa-action as well as "respective trade un-tions so as to give -more benefit to them?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that we have made arrange- ments for this. We have the SCOVA i.e., the Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies dealing with pensioners. Their organisations are represented on this Committee. We have regular meetings which I chair myself. We take note of all the recommendations, complaints, memoranda which they present through various agencies. They are discussed and followed up. Action is taken and reported, I mean, we try to accommodate as many of their requests as possible; for instance, now, there are requests about medical attention and various other benefits which the pensions would like to receive. So, we look into this regularly. There are regular meetings of the SCOVA in which these issues are brought before us and we discuss them together with all the officers and others present in this including the Ministries where a large number of pensioners exist, like we have the Railways, we have the P and T the Defence and so on. They are all represented on the SCOVA. As far as off-setting the price rise is concerned, I have already mentioned that provision for D.A. has now been built into the pension scheme because of which the prob lems that they earlier had been att ended to. Sir, there is a. minimum pension, as of now. of Rs 375 plus DA. which i_s added on, but the hon. Member is probably referring to cases where they were not entitled to pensions because there" was no scheme in certain agencies. But then, *ad hoc* pensions were given to' them as a kind of gesture; which might not be part of the main pension scheme, but these ad hoc pensions, I do real-ise, are still outside the minimum pension limits and it has not been possible to bring all of them on a par with the regular pension scheme.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir I would like to ' go back a little to what the hon. Minister stated a little while ago regarding the 40,000 pensioners who are paid in foreign exchange in Nepal. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, in the face of the fact that we do have a rupee trade with Nepal and even today, I can send money to Nepal by a money order or receive money from there by even a money order, why those pensioners in Nepal are geting money in foreign currency. Why can't they be paid in Indian rupees? I would like to know the answer for this.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir these are the commitments which have already been made and are being kept. And these pensioners there are being paid in the Nepalese currency the local currency there. We have not yet thought it necessary

to change it. But, I would like to say that we are doing it under the commitments which were made in the past.

SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN: Sir, some cases of freedom fighters for pension are still pending with the Home Ministry of the Government of India. And it is very difficult to understand what the reason for this inordinate delay in taking a decision is. For example, I had brought to tnelir notice one case of Shri Jeevan Goha. He was a freedom fighter and he took part in the 1942 movement. At present, he is in a very serious disaressing condition ailing at Calcutta. I personally know this case and on the 10th of February, I wrote a letter to the Home Minister enclosing documents to prove that he was a freedom fighter. I received a reply also. But, no decision has yet •been taken. Will the Minister be pleased to say that this will be considered by her?

SMT. MARGARET ALVA: As I said earlier, the Ministry of Personnel does not handle freedom fighters' pension directly. But I shall take the details from the hon. Member and personally follow it up with the Home Ministry... (In *terrup tions)*

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: As Minister of Public Grievances, she has taken it up.

SMT. MARGARET ALVA: Yes, as Minister of Public Grievances I am prepared to take the papers from the hon. Minister, and follow it up.

*323. [*The questioner (.Shri S. S. Ahluwalia)* was absent. For answer Vide Col..... infra]

Export orders bagged by BHEL

324. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:†

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Rajni Ranjan Sahu.

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the export orders bagged by BHLL inis year indicating the increase in the number of equipment to De exported;

(b) what is the rupee value of such exports and aiso in foreign exchange terms during 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISIRY OF INDUSTRY I DPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DriVEiA)PMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) BHEL has begged export orders from seven countries during this year as against four in the previous year.

(b) THE value of the export orders baged during 1992-93 is Rs. 227 crores approximately (US$ 71 million approximately).

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Sir, the BHEL., with over 73,000 strong work-force including 11,000 highly qualified engineers has after three decades of their effective and fruitful struggle made a prominent place in the world market. But I am sorry to say, Sir, that the export orders are declining. In 1988-89, they were Rs. 276 crores, in 1989-90, Rs. 381 crores, in 1990-91, Rs. 490 crores and, as per the reply in 1992-93, they were only Rs. 227 crores. This is very alarming. I would like to know from the honourable Minister while are the main products of BHEL in demand abroad, that is, country-wise and which of them have a demand in the developed world including the European countries.

Secondly, I would also like to know which are the main equipments in demand abroad and whether they include power equipment also and what their value is in terms of dollars.